pending for STD/ISD telephones and PCOs during the last two years are given as under:

	As on 31.3.2002	As on 31.3.2003
Number of applications pending for provision of STD/ISD Telephones in Uttaranchal	2322	2958
Number of pending applications for provision of STD/ISD, PCO booths	261	356

(b) Efforts are afoot to make the areas technically feasible by increasing the capacity of existing exchanges, installation of new exchanges wherever necessary and laying underground cables wherever required as also introduction of WLL based technology in areas not accessible by underground cable.

Scam in BSNL's Central Store of Moradabad

†2953. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that a scam has come to light in the central store of BSNL, Moradabad;

(b) if so, when Government came to know about it and the losses occurred therein;

(c) the persons found responsible for the scam; and

(d) the action taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Irregularities have been noticed in disposal of stores.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) It came to notice through the news-item published in "Nav Bharat Times". New Delhi on 17.2.2003 Unserviceable stores of 496.55 quintals of wooden and iron materials were disposed off for Rs. 98,350 through regular bidding process and the amount credited to the Government account.

(c) Preliminary investigation reveals certain lapses on the part of Sub-Divisional Engineer (Material Management), O/o the General Manager Telecom District, Moradabad.

(d) Detailed inquiry by vigilance to ascertain the lapses of official(s) involved is in progress and action will be taken accordingly. In the mean time SDE (MM), has been transferred from Moradabad to Amroha on 28.1.2003.

Post offices in Himachal Pradesh

2954. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state the number of branch post offices/sub post offices proposed to be opened by Government in Himachal Pradesh during the financial year 2002-03 alongwith locations thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Two branch post offices were proposed to be opened in Himachal Pradesh during the financial year 2002-2003. One branch post office has been opened at village Bamta, District Bilaspur on 14.12.2002 and another at village Hari Behna, District Mandi on 27.01.2003.

Payment of bills in Lowerkoti branch post office

†2955. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the telephone subscribers of villages-Sidrohi, Chhupari, Bagi, Lowerkoti, Pausa, Dhara, Shaddu and Chiuni

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.